

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

In the *Harbinger of Light*, Dr. Rohner comments on the original Hydesville story. The recent publication of the *Missing Link in Modern Spiritualism*, by Mr. Underhill, one of the actors in the scene, has supplemented the meagre details furnished in Epes Sargent's *Planchette*, an account based of course on second-hand evidence. It is but another instance of the critical attitude that Spiritualists occupy in regard to the facts of which they are the best, and indeed the only competent exponents, that the writer finds grave fault with Mr. Underhill's book for its want of precision, its omissions and suppressions of facts darkly hinted at, and for its generally unscientific and loose character. Some of my readers may be glad to have the case in a nutshell.

"As almost all Spiritualists have read or heard of the Hydesville phenomena, a mere outline of the facts is all that is here required: Long before the epochal 31st March, 1848, strange noises and raps had been heard in the Hydesville house by tenants who occupied the place prior to the arrival of the Fox family, but little or no notice was taken by the predecessors of the Foxes. The substance of the facts relating to the haunting of the house was elicited by the Fox family, and especially through the intervention of the mediumship of Catherine and Margaret Fox, and the revelations made by the spirit went to show that a man had been murdered some five years anterior to 1848, in the house by the then occupant of the humble dwelling; that he was robbed and his body buried in the cellar of the cottage at a depth of ten feet. The man thus treated, or rather his returning spirit, alleged that he was a married man and had five children, that he had 500 dollars on his person at the time the murder was committed; but no evidence is adduced that in 1843, or thereabouts, any such murder had been committed in Hydesville, or any police inquiry made about such a crime.

"But what is more peculiar still is that when the Hydesville phenomena had roused the whole country-side, and hundreds and thousands of spectators had visited the place, still the authorities of the law seemed to have taken no notice whatever, and actually neglected to impound the *corpus delicti* of the crime—the fragments of bones, hair, and teeth alleged by a doctor to be human—and hold a strict inquiry into the truth or otherwise of so horrible a tragedy: a tragedy, moreover, which haunted the minds of thousands of persons who had come to inspect the locality for themselves, and to allay whose doubts one would think the administrators of justice would be obliged to make a searching investigation, if not of the spiritual phenomena, at least of the relics of the body of the supposed murdered man."

It must be admitted that it is easy to ask questions, and that the answers to them are not so easy to find. These were not days of scientific precision, nor were the Fox family trained in habits of exact thought, nor was Hydesville just the place to which one would go for perfect

methods of investigation. I do not see how the *lacunæ* in the narrative can now be supplied, but I am at one with Dr. Rohner in the remarks he makes on the case, while wholly believing the substantial truth of what I do not understand him to impugn. It is to be desired that every effort should be made during the lifetime of the Fox sisters to obtain from them every possible detail. If it be not too late now, it soon must be. Dr. Rohner concludes his analysis thus:—

"Another strange feature in the narrative of the *Missing Link* is the fact that the men employed in opening the grave in the cellar did not prosecute their labours after finding portions of a human skeleton at a depth of six feet from the surface of the cellar floor, when they were actually informed by the spirit of the murdered man that he was buried ten feet deep. Why did they stay their work when they had reached a board or lid of an extemporised coffin in which they might have surmised that the body of the murdered man lay buried? And why did not others continue their work at this most interesting point—apparently the turning point round which the solution of the whole mystery revolved? Was it not contemplated that the body of the murdered and robbed hawker should be dragged to the light of day and (if possible) identified? Why all this flagrant and inconsistent neglect, both on the part of the Fox family and that of the police? Whose interest was it to leave this matter unsifted? Where were the widow and the children of the murdered man at the time of the discovery, and why did not they stir up the matter and insist upon a proper investigation?

"In the interest of a scientific Spiritualism, which looks upon Hydesville as the Bethlehem of its new creed, it is to be hoped that further inquiry will be made into the perplexities and inconsistencies surrounding the grave scene of the still unidentified hawker, as also into the veracity of the grave-diggers, and the value of their evidence."

Mind in Nature has an interesting speculation respecting the nature of the intelligence at work in communications purporting to be from spirits of the departed. Though we do not by any means agree with it in all its details it is of sufficient interest and importance to warrant us in laying it before our readers.

"The intelligence manifested by this force seems to be the *ultima ratio* of the spiritual philosopher, since he cannot perceive how it can be explained upon any other principle. When we reflect upon the fact that the circulation of the blood, the pulsation of the heart, and the heaving of the lungs are all involuntary motions, and performed as readily and as accurately when asleep and unconscious as when awake and conscious, perhaps we may obtain a key to the solution of the mighty problem that so puzzles the world.

"That the somnambulist and entranced magnetised subject, or medium, so-called, are not only entirely unconscious, but perform many wonders beyond their ability when awake or in a normal state, no experienced person will deny, and the question naturally arises, from whence comes this power or increased intelligence? An experience of thirty-five years justifies me in concluding that in all cases where an intelligence has been exhibited beyond that possessed by any person present, which is often the fact, a hitherto latent, undeveloped talent or selfhood, in the medium, renders perceptive through an increased mental sight, facts, events, and princi-

ples unknown before. My idea is this: In an entranced or highly magnetised state, the mind is easily impregnated and instantly presents unknown facts, or truths having existed ages before, without the slow process of the reasoning powers. In other words, the mind becomes a mirror, and upon it is reflected a fact, event, or principle of which there was no previous knowledge. I shall not pause to prove that this has often been done, but recall to the mind of the reader the excitement produced forty years ago or more, by the reading of books and designating the time of day by the watch or a clock, when the eyes of the subject were bandaged. This is a known fact and requires no proof. The physical eyes did not see the book, did not behold the watch, yet the book was correctly read and the time accurately given. It is no use to deny the facts, patent to thousands, because we cannot account for them by any known law; we must search for some *unknown* law, and not attribute the mystery to a supernatural agency.

"That there is an inner sight we must believe, and that this sight extends far back beyond the seer or any external knowledge whatever, is apparent to me, having tested it in numerous instances. My philosophy, in regard to this fact, is that there is a world of principles, ideas, and facts, as well as a world of matter and motion, and that in this world of thought and mind, everything that ever existed exists still, as a past reality, and has left its impression or stereotyped itself; and the minds of these impressible persons, called mediums or psychics, like mirrors, receive the reflections of these existences as principles and facts *independent of the will of any creature*; their inner vision thus illuminated, enabling them to write or speak accordingly. As persons in the sunlight perceive an object before them because it is there, without willing themselves to see it or even desiring to see it; so a true clairvoyant, by the aid of this second sight or inner vision, sees principles, facts, events, conditions, places, and objects without any previous knowledge of their existence, simply because they *do* exist, and manifest themselves to their senses.

"In the process of daguerreotyping, the shadow of the face or any other object falls upon the prepared plate and the reflection is thus made durable or permanent. So any object that exists or ever has existed, any person, any event, any principle, any idea, however absurd or false, in like manner may fall upon the prepared or illuminated camera of the mind and base an impression. A face upon the artist's camera fixes its blemishes, and the dwarfed tree or the crooked limb takes equally well in the picture as the straight perfect one. *Whatever is there, takes!* And so of this invisible reflection upon the mental camera or mirror of the mind. Somebody believes spirits to exist, to communicate, that they do this or do that, and intangible as is that idea, that too is taken into the picture made by the mind along with the truth and becomes a reflection of what is, even as the operator lies when he compels his subject intentionally to believe himself a king or a fool, when he is neither. A person speaks the French language never having studied it or heard it spoken; *how?* Because the language has an *existence*, and such is his mental condition that its reflection upon his brain becomes permanent for five minutes, and he speaks it or writes it during that time, after which all is dark as before. Upon this hypothesis of projection and reflection, it will be perceived that, not only matter of fact, but the belief, true or false, of any one, present or absent, living or dead, might be reflected and given in writing or speech, or even by the raps or movements, or a living person might apparently communicate, which is often the case."

Dr. Shufeldt, one of the American scientific leaders who are showing interest in psychical phenomena, records a remarkable dream of his father's, which is interesting. The imperfect recollection of dreams causes them to attract less attention than they should. Yet some very wonderful knowledge has come to men while their bodies slept. Agassiz, for example, working all day over a fossil fish, and retiring with the key to the problem still out of reach, awoke from a dream wherein all the obscure characters were made clear to him, and from this alone was enabled to solve the problem. Dr. Shufeldt's dream is as follows:—

"A number of years ago, my father commanded a United States man-of-war, crossing the Indian Ocean between Singapore and Cape Town, South Africa. On the first day's passage out from the former place my father had, during the night of that

day, a strange and indistinct dream. He dreamt that he was already in Cape Town, and had taken a small house in the suburbs of the place, to spend a week or ten days while his vessel was undergoing repairs. During the first night of his stay in it he was awakened from a sound sleep by a man who stood at his bedside. This man was dressed all in white, and had a peculiar girdle about his waist, in which he wore three handsome jewel-hilted knives. His beard was long, white, and flowing, and he directed my father to dress himself, and when this was done he led him out into the country, back of Cape Town, and then travelled to the northward for three days and three nights, when they passed into a long valley, between low hills. Here they soon encountered peculiar piles of earth, resembling the giant ant-nests of that region. This strange guide then directed my father's special attention to what he did. First he removed one of the knives from his girdle, thrust it into one of the earth piles, turned it quickly outwards, when it was followed by a perfect shower of diamonds. The remaining two knives were used for a similar purpose on two other piles, with like results. Then he took from a turban which he wore a small piece of parchment and wrote upon it a certain latitude and longitude, once more pointed to the piles, and then led my father back to his house in Cape Town. From this dream he awoke tired and weary, only to dream it the second night of his trip out, with still greater vividness; while on the third night it was so vividly reproduced that he awoke with a start, exhausted, and limb-weary. Upon arriving at Cape Town he told of his dream to a number of people, and several persons advised him to try and secure a delay there with the view of repairing to the locality indicated by the latitude and longitude which his dream-guide had given him, and which had corresponded on every night of the dream. One friend strongly urged him to resign the Navy, organise an expedition, and start out at once. But my father took none of this advice into consideration, and simply made a faithful account of the dream, with the dates and all, in his private journal, and *now* it has pasted opposite to it the *New York Herald* account, which bears date of exactly one year later, of the discovery of those rich diamond fields, the richest in the world, which were not so very long ago discovered in South Africa, while the strangest thing of it all is, that the latitudes and longitudes as given in the dream, agree to the very minutes and seconds with those of the locality where the field was eventually discovered, and as indicated in the *New York Herald* report of it."

"Saul among the prophets" is the first suggestion to the mind as I read the following. Surely the *Pall Mall Gazette* is the most inconsistent of journals. Now furious and foaming against any form of Spiritualism, then virtuously indignant against a judge who does not believe in astrology! A fair indication of the instability of the controlling mind that rules its destinies. This is how it comes out in its latest mood:—

"Alas, poor 'Neptune!' 'Neptune' is the assumed name of Mr. Penny, who has the misfortune to share the belief of three-fourths of the human race in all time, that the destinies of mortals can be read in the stars. Fined £5 and costs by the police magistrate for casting horoscopes, he appealed to the Queen's Bench Division, and his appeal was dismissed with contumely. No one who knows Penny can doubt for a moment that he honestly believes in astrology. Yet Mr. Justice Denman declared:—'It was too nonsensical to suppose for a moment that a man could really believe that he had the power to predict the fortune of another man by merely knowing the day on which he was born. We did not live in times in which it was possible to think that anybody could believe such nonsense, unless he was a lunatic, and there was in this case no evidence of insanity.' Seldom has a judge uttered a dictum more arrogant and more untrue. At this moment seven-eighths of the subjects of her Majesty, including the great tributaries of the East, implicitly believe in astrology. The astrologer is an important functionary in the Courts of Constantinople, Teheran, and Peking. Nay, even in the United Kingdom, there are more who believe in astrology than most people imagine. Zadkiel is read by duchesses and Cabinet Ministers, but owing to the overbearing arrogance of the unbelievers, they seldom confess their faith."

Mr. C. C. Massey addressed the following letter in comment on the Editorial Note, and in explanation of the real state of the case. All our readers will learn with regret

that Mr. Massey should be a sufferer for his chivalrous defence of a man whose belief he shares.

"SIR,—Although I would be the last to say anything in derogation of the respect and regard in which Mr. Justice Denman is deservedly held by all who know him, and by the bar generally, and I could never bring myself to apply to him the vigorous terms in your Note of this evening upon the case of *Penny v. Hanson*, I must, nevertheless, as the real sufferer—so far as costs are concerned—by the very questionable decision in that case, thank you for your outspoken vindication of the honesty and good faith of my poor astrologer. He has been condemned either by a sweeping *à priori* presumption, or by what I submit to be a perfectly illogical conception of what constitutes evidence. This is not in itself a question of law (or I should not venture to discuss it in a newspaper), though it is one which always belongs to the court to decide. In considering to which tribunal we should appeal, I was influenced by the belief that a logical and unprejudiced judgment was more likely to be obtained from a superior court than from the sessions. This confidence has received a rude shock. Ably as the case was argued by Mr. Murphy, Q.C., it is evident from the reports that the two judges were throughout deaf to every consideration urged upon them at variance with what is probably the popular presumption—namely, that every professional astrologer must be consciously an impostor. How absurdly untrue this is you have well pointed out, as did Mr. Murphy in his argument. From an interlocutory observation of Mr. Justice Mathew, it seems that he adopted the fallacy that receipt of money, or rather (for in this case no money passed) the pursuit of astrology as a profession, supplies positive evidence of an intent to deceive. To presume that because money is the common inducement of the impostor, therefore a possibly *bond fide* belief loses that character as soon as it is turned to pecuniary account, is about the worst specimen of logic that ever received judicial authority. And as a matter of fact, not to mention many other names distinguished in their day, one of the most eminent and honest men that ever lived—Kepler—practised astrology for reward. Two of the newspapers in commenting on the case sarcastically observe that Penny should not have appealed, as he ought to have foreseen the result by astrology. The writers forget that even lawyers and physicians do not rely on their own judgments in their own cases. But as regards myself—the real mover in this case—I may say that in my correspondence with Penny since it commenced I have repeatedly declared my judgment, on astrological grounds, which he would appreciate, that the decision would be adverse. But I hoped that an impression might be produced, by information and discussion, upon public opinion, perhaps with the ultimate result of a modification of the law.—I am, sir, your obedient servant (and one of Mr. Justice Denman's 'lunatics'), C. C. MASSEY, 1, Albert-mansions, S.W., February 26th."

THE TRANCE.

Dead? I knew not. Was it dying,
This surcease of pain? I saw
On the bed my white form lying
And the watchers hushed in awe.
I—where was I? Floating lightly
In an exquisite surprise
On the ether which so brightly
Builds the fabric of the skies.
Rings of light around me spreading;
Planets whirling in the vast;
Suns a fiery whiteness shedding;
Comets flashing far and fast.
Brighter circles yet and vaster
Seemed to tempt me to explore,
And the spinning worlds went faster,
Worlds on worlds and ever more.
So I launched me on the surging
Force that floats the radiant spheres—
Force eternal, ever urging
Planets to the birth of years.
And in rapturous self-surrender
On that tide I floated far,
Nearing now the central splendour,
Seeking now some exiled star.

Now the broad belt of Orion
Flashed its glories on my ken,
Now I glimpsed the sky-built Zion
Golden with the hopes of men.

Oh, the glad unceasing vision!
Oh, the ever-widening range!
Oh, the grandeur of fruition!
Oh, the ecstasy of change!

Yet I paused. A something made me
Backward glance, I knew not why;
Half reluctant, I delayed me—
Was it not enough to die?

And I saw again the chamber
Where my fleshly hull lay cold,
And the sunset's glowing amber
Circled my dead brow with gold.

In the chamber stood a maiden—
Ah, that radiant sun-kissed hair—
Ah, those eyes with tear-drops laden—
She, my love and my despair.

Then she moved in trembling fashion
To the bed whereon I lay—
Lifeless lay—and kissed with passion,
Kissed and kissed again, my clay.

"Ah," she cried, "I loved him truly,
Loved him than my own life more—
Wherefore, O thou heart unruly,
Didst not own thyself before?"

"Now no more the dear eyes glisten
With the love they used to tell—
Would, oh, would that he could listen!—
Ah, I loved him—loved him well."

Thus in sorrow unavailing,
Bent like lily dew-bedight,
Wept she, kissing and bewailing
Tenderly her dead delight.

And I felt them—felt those kisses
Warmer than the sunny South—
Felt them through the space-abysses
Fragrant on my cold, dead mouth;

And a something reached me, human,
Tender, beautiful and true—
'Twas the deathless love of woman
Strong to thrill creation through.

And the kisses, ever burning,
Warmer, sweeter, fonder still,
Filled my distant soul with yearning,
Shaped the yearning into will.

Then the ether lost its brightness,
And the planets seemed to crawl,
And there fell before the whiteness
Of the flaming suns a pall.

Earth and earth alone was gleaming
Isle-like in the azure sea,
All beside was shrunk to seeming,
This the only real for me.

And a sweet compulsion drew me
Back to where my loved-one stood,
And the thrills of earth ran through me,
Stirring into life the blood.

Then the lids I lifted, lately
Closed upon the sight's eclipse,
Met her gaze, and, yearning greatly,
Caught upon my own her lips.

"Kiss me, dearest, kiss me, sweetest;
What to me are realms above?
Thou alone my life completest,
Now I know at last thy love."

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

CAPTAIN ELDON SERJEANT is about to publish in the *Tribune* a series of articles relating to the "Coming Reformation." Our readers will, no doubt, be interested in Captain Serjeant's papers, for he is an old student of the occult, and much versed in these matters.

HOW I INVESTIGATED SPIRITUALISM, AND WHAT I MADE OF IT.

By J. H. M.

PART III.

There is no royal road to knowledge. The early steps of the ladder of learning prove tedious and uninteresting, necessitating patience and perseverance on the part of the learner. In investigating this strange phenomenon, I soon discovered that Spiritualism, so far from proving an exception to the rule, presented difficulties of its own, and of a more subtle and complex nature than any I had before met with. And for this reason, among others; in connection with this subject *I had so much to unlearn*. It is true that for many years I had discarded much orthodox theological clothing, rejoicing, as a Theist of the Voyseyite school, in the liberty of free and unrestricted religious thought. In this investigation I anticipated an easy task, so far as any revelations of futurity might enter into it, in consequence of my freedom from the trammels of dogma. But I found I had over-estimated my mental franchise, and very much over-rated the value of agnostic and negative ideas. It is questionable if any man, this side the veil,—and in some cases for many years on the other,—succeeds in completely emancipating himself from the influences of early education. In the progress of this inquiry I discovered that in my treasured reformed conceptions of the future life I had, to a large extent, unconsciously to myself, put the new wine of freethought once more into the old, conventional orthodox bottles. Preconceived, inherited ideas of the future world, its inhabitants and occupations, constitute so many barriers that must be removed and got rid of before the mind is able adequately to grasp the facts and realities of spirit existence. Many a *pons asinorum* has to be mastered before the student of super-mundane mysteries can feel firm ground beneath his feet, and one of these “difficulties by the way” I encountered in our next séance. In reproducing for the benefit of others my humble experiences in the search for the truth underlying spiritual phenomena, I may inform the reader that while writing these narratives I have before me a diary of all the séances, with the events noted down at the time of occurrence. In many instances the accuracy of the details has been verified by the unseen intelligences themselves. However incredible some of the experiences I shall relate may appear to the uninitiated mind, I have not, to my knowledge, twisted a single statement or incident to support or rebut any preconceived theory either of my own or of anyone else, nor kept back a vital fact, satisfactory or otherwise, that might assist the reader in arriving at a just and true decision. The incident of the séance I am about to relate created at the time a profoundly unpleasant impression, both on my wife and myself, and nearly resulted in the abandonment of further research. It is not without feelings of deep gratitude I remember to have been impressed to persevere. Had I given up the quest at this stage I should have missed an important pathway to the Temple of Truth, where I have found the key to many sad problems of life and mind. I should have lost a priceless consolation, founded on knowledge that never fails to sustain the drooping spirit, be the clouds incidental to this educational life never so dark, or the trial never so prolonged.

Not to weary the reader with tedious detail, I may state that, as the result of various family sittings, our circle of spiritual acquaintances had been considerably extended. Something like twenty-five or thirty names, most of them quite unknown to the sitters, had been communicated to us either by means of the alphabet or written automatically and accompanied with more or less detail pertaining to their earthly existences. At some of

these earlier séances it was not an uncommon occurrence for a communicating intelligence to refuse to give a name. Occasionally these anonymous visitors were decidedly demonstrative, on one occasion literally snatching the table from our hands, and, before we could prevent it, dashing it to the ground with sufficient force to break off part of the foot of one of its legs. It was our invariable custom to inquire of such visitors if they were good spirits, and whenever we received a reply in the negative to refuse further communication and request them to go away. On the occasion in question, my wife, my daughter Jane, and myself, were the sitters at the commencement. Five different spirits in succession professed to come to communicate, all of whom, on declaring themselves to be bad, were ordered to depart. Our five interruptions, I afterwards learnt, were repeated visits of the same spirit that persisted in troubling us. By means of the alphabet we ultimately obtained the name of my wife's deceased sister, E——h A——s, at this time a frequent visitor to our circle. In answer to questions put by my wife, the replies were confused and contradictory, and in no way resembling previous communications from the spirit purporting to be speaking. Given alphabetically by means of the table they were seldom completed so as to be intelligible, and when attempted to be written through the hand of my son John, who had joined the circle at this juncture, proved meaningless, or silly, and indifferently spelt. I had been requested by the spirit to leave the table, and had done so, sitting a few feet away and occupied in taking notes of the proceedings. We all felt disturbed and uncomfortable, without being able to account for our feelings; our previous conditions had always been so good, every message spelt out clearly and unmistakably without hitch or hesitation. Obviously false messages and broken sentences were quite a new feature. My suspicions were aroused that all was not right. In some way or other we were being deceived and trifled with. Could it be some spirit personating my wife's deceased sister? The idea was a very uncomfortable one, but the suspicion having arisen under pressure of evidence of imposture of some kind, I found it difficult to shake it off. The magnetic force was enormous. There was no lack of power. Why then should the communications received be confusing and absurd? I said, aloud, Are you in reality the spirit you profess to be, and whose name you have given; are you my wife's deceased sister? The violent action of the table at once ceased. A subdued single knock responded *No*. Are you a bad spirit? *Yes*. Have you been deceiving us all this time? *Yes*. Have you been long dead? *No*. Did you die a natural death? *No*. Were you hung? *Yes*. Did you deserve to be? *Yes*. Are you trying to be better now? *Yes* (forcibly). Are you in the lowest sphere? *Yes*. At this stage we paused for a short time. There was something deeply offensive in the idea of holding converse either with a murderer or a spirit personating a murderer. This was an episode forming quite a new departure in the case, opening up disagreeable possibilities not understood and unpleasant to contemplate. How could we hope with any benefit to ourselves to develop communication with the unseen world if so wicked a deception as personation was possible? If deception was possible in one case, it might be in all; further pursuit, therefore, appeared hopeless and useless. We sat for a time in silence, scarcely knowing how to proceed, when the hand of my son John began to twitch and move violently as with a desire to write. On providing pencil and paper he at once wrote automatically: “*You need have no fear of deception if you take proper precautions. Yes. I have not been dead long, and I mean to get better. I am sorry I deceived you to-night.*”

This was definite enough, but more inexplicable than ever. I desired no further communication, except to be

furnished with the name of the spirit purporting to be that of a murderer. In response, my son John automatically wrote the name, *Percy Mapleton*. With very uncomfortable feelings we rose from the circle. If this be Spiritualism, I'll have no more of it, I thought. The name given was unknown to us. This séance took place on the 11th February, 1884. It was not until the day following our sitting, and when the unpleasant impression created by the incident had somewhat faded from the mind, that the name, *Percy Mapleton*, suddenly flashed across the brain of my wife in connection with the murder in the Balcomb Tunnel of the Brighton Railway. The name of the murderer was PERCY LEFROY MAPLETON.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW.

"Geometrical Psychology ; or, The Science of Representation." Theories and Diagrams of W. BETTS.

Explained by LOUISA S. COOK.*

That combinations of lines, even those representing the simplest processes of arithmetic, may produce forms of great beauty is quite true, but that these forms should represent duty, emotion, activity, and the like, requires a series of assumptions very easy to make indeed, but very difficult to prove.

It may be true that the "unposited point" is a symbol of pure Being; that the abstract noumenon, that which underlies every mode of phenomenal manifestation, every form of existence, is at once All and Nothing, at once Absolute Consciousness and Unconsciousness, on the supposition of the existence of an "unposited point." Moreover, such a point, having lost its only attribute, that of position, would probably be "unconscious according to our conception of consciousness;" but calmly to assume that this "unposited point" is, or represents, consciousness itself, and on that assumption to build up a whole scheme of mathematical metaphysics, is surely going rather far. Yet this is what, as far as one can disentangle his ideas from the knotted skein of words, has apparently been done by Mr. W. Betts, the inventor or discoverer of "Geometrical Psychology."

This positionless point divides into two—presumably also unposited points—the Alpha and Omega, upon which Mr. Betts or his interpreter dilates as follows: "Only the abstract duality—the polar aspects of the one substance, the infinite Alpha and Omega, which is the source of all things, and in which all things live, and move, and have their being—remains unchanged. Under whatsoever changing forms it may appear, duality, polarity, antithesis, is the one unchanging law of evolution." This may be all very well, as poetry, but does not readily lead up to the foundation of a positive science in which a protractor scale has to be used. A treatise on metaphysical engineering should begin differently from this.

That the science of mathematics may, in a more advanced stage of progress, lend itself to the elucidation of what are called moral problems, as it has done to the investigation of physical problems, is possible, for a state of existence is conceivable in which what we now call moral laws may then or there be known as physical. But its application, to be of any value, must be, like the science itself, as exact as possible. At present we know too little of the nature of things in themselves to make this exact application.

Mr. Betts's work consists mainly of a series of diagrams of admirable execution, the description of which forms the subject-matter, and so involves the philosophy of the book, if rhetorical assertion can be called philosophy. We thus get pictures in which there are "lines of perception" combined with "circles of emotional possibility," and limited "lines of realised emotions"—all arranged according to

mathematical laws, but which might just as well be "lines of average sale of corn in Mark-lane," combined with "circles of expectations of a possible rise," and "limiting lines of realised profit."

Once so started, the development of flower-forms, "Horn Corollas," "Biaxial Corollas," and so on, is a mere matter of time. But the beautiful flower-forms which Mr. Betts has produced, and which could be produced, we humbly submit, in immensely greater variety by the interpretations of co-ordinate geometry, do not so much render the message of a Devonshire lane in spring-time intelligible to the traveller as they show the capacity of Mr. Betts for elaborate construction on hastily-assumed and hazy premisses.

That haziness is characteristic of the work quotations already made would, at least, suggest, but one more will strengthen the assertion. Speaking of what he calls the third standing-ground of life, the author says:—

"The form of the third ground is the resultant of the combined activity of cubical forces arising out of a point which is for convenience regarded as fixed, viz., the personal Ego. The new activity, that of soul, ascends upwards, expanding within a circle which is the resultant of the activities of rational sense-perception and imagination, or extension and expansion. The circuit of the new activity (every activity is polar) depends upon a point above the form which is conceived of as an absolute and infinite non-Ego."

Here we have cubical forces! an upward ascent within a circle! and a circuit (circle?) dependent upon a point! After this we are not surprised that the invisible form of the activities immediately concerned in the production of the solar system is a nine-petalled lily.

And yet there is hope in the book. Once more we see made an attempt, futile it may be, yet an honest attempt, to get at some knowledge of the laws of being, and no such honest attempt can be made without some truth being obtained, in whatever incrustation of worthless matter it may be found. The certainty of a life that may be developed into possibilities of power and influence, such as one can barely dream of, is evidently in no way a matter of doubt to the writer. And when he gets away from circles, and geometrical and harmonical progressions, he can say this of the fourth ground of life:—

"The Ego has given itself up, the personal desires are quenched, and the whole desire of the soul is poured forth in a despairing cry for knowledge—life. Desire compels fruition—and when the soul, from the depth of its sorrow and despair, flings itself forth into the infinite in an infinite passion of longing—then, when the battle of life seems lost, all is won. Spiritual perception awakes, and the isolated fragment is received back into the bosom of the All. In the self-forgetfulness of that supreme moment, in the unutterable bliss of that reunion, the sacrifice is accomplished, the self-surrender is complete. Man passes through the gate of death into the only true life, which is not egotism, not altruism, but eternal unity."

Passages of this kind, demonstrating the existence in the author's mind of a lofty ideal of progress, occur frequently, and if systematised without the intervention of mathematical symbols, might form a work of considerable value.

Though dissenting from the methods employed, as having no sure basis, yet one cannot help being influenced by the single-minded earnestness of both author and transcriber, an earnestness visible in every line.

The engravings of curves and flower-forms are really beautiful works of art.

MR. EGLINTON.

Mr. Eglinton is still at St. Petersburg and does not know when he will be able to leave, having received commands from the Emperor to stay for further séances. In addition to the persons of distinction mentioned last week to whom Mr. Eglinton has given successful sittings, we learn that very satisfactory séances have since been given to M. de Giers (Foreign Minister), Count Ignatieff, Their Royal Highnesses of Mecklenburg-Schwérein, Marquis de Camposagrado (Spanish Ambassador), Prince Bélosseksky, and several distinguished Professors.

* G. Redway, York-street, Covent Garden. 1887.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
16, CRAVEN STREET,
CHARING CROSS, W.C.

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Light :

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.);" and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12th, 1887.

THE INVESTIGATION OF RARE PHENOMENA.

No. IV.

Perhaps one of the most amusing portions of the criticism, if such it can be termed, of the Mr. Know-all, is the self-sufficiency which he is perpetually parading before his readers, as he offers suggestions as to how easily *he* would have found out everything had he been present when the slate-writing or other phenomenon was said to occur. The multitude of accumulated evidence as regards the impossibility of the slates being changed, and of the answers given to the question asked being written under such conditions that the medium must have been more than human to have known what either were, is all ignored. Some one report of a séance—and that not the best and strongest—is selected, and this being given as a mere report of what occurred, is twisted and turned in every way in order, if possible, to find a weak point. Immediately any trifle light as air seems doubtful, then to the sceptic this becomes confirmation, strong as proof of Holy Writ, of his suspicions. Then the sceptic's fertile imagination comes into play, and he favours his readers with his profound conclusions, speaking, with a sort of suggested moderation, something in the following style :—"It seems not improbable that what occurred may have been somewhat as follows : After the question had been written in the locked slates, they were held under the table by the medium and the answer written by him, and he then placed it on the table, suggested that the slates should be unlocked, and then, by sleight of hand, slipped a piece of worn pencil between the slates, and thus tricked the observer."

When we read such criticism, based on the merest assumptions, evolved from the imagination of the critic, and having no foundation in fact, we feel certain that there is an imposition, but that the person who is practising it is the critic himself. This consists in magnifying the very slightest want of agreement in the evidence of two witnesses into a proof that their evidence of the main fact is worthless ; in suggesting that events took place which never did take place, but slurring over, as of no value, important facts ; and in then imagining some conditions which never existed to have really occurred, and finally drawing conclusions from these.

Men who have never seen a certain phenomenon may easily find flaws in the evidence or consistency of the evidence of those who have witnessed it. Two persons may have been witnesses of a terrific thunderstorm in India. One may assert that there were twenty flashes of lightning per minute, the other may state there were ten per minute. Ah ! says the critic, the witnesses were incompetent ; their varied accounts prove that no thunder-

storm took place at all : their evidence will not bear the test of investigation. Now I will tell you how it was done : a man procured a mirror and flashed light before the eyes of these persons, then shook a piece of sheet-iron to imitate thunder, and thus played his trick. Why you have merely to go to any common theatre and you will see the whole thing done ; so you perceive how incompetent these witnesses are, and what a very clever fellow I am. I know all about it.

When the recorded facts are of such a character as to defy such puerile criticism then the only course left is to deny the accuracy of the facts. Those who make these assertions are mistaken, or are not stating facts accurately, or have imagined the whole thing. He who was not present has the effrontery to assert that he knows better what took place than those who were present. Such a critic, however, has no false modesty ; he does not hesitate to evolve from his imagination what occurred, and to put this forward as though every detail had been carefully observed.

We will now give an account of one among many such circumstances which occurred in our own experience. A gentleman, doubting the fact of the occurrence of abnormal phenomena, was determined to put his belief to the test. To do so, he, with a friend, arranged to meet a medium at a certain hour in the evening, in a certain street in London. The two friends, with the medium, proceeded to a room, which the medium had never entered before. More than this, she had no possible means of knowing beforehand where the séance was to be held. Three chairs and a table were in this room, and no other furniture. Shortly after sitting at the table, some raps were heard on the table, and by these raps the inquirer was directed to place a pencil and paper on the floor under the table. A sheet of note-paper, initialed by the inquirer, and a pencil were placed as directed, and writing was heard under the table. Then, by raps on the table, it was intimated that the paper should be examined. Previous to the paper being taken up, a request was made by the inquirer that the words written on the paper should be indicated by raps on the table. A woman's name was then spelt out by the raps. The paper was taken up, and on it was written in Hindustani characters the same name. The name of the writer of this word was then spelt out by raps, and it was the name of a great friend of the inquirer, who had undertaken, if there really was an existence after death, to communicate with the inquirer and to give this name as a test.

Here is a case which a reasoning mind would consider carried a large amount of proof, but our critic laughs at it. His criticism, if we may judge from his previous examples, would be as follows :—

Your report proves how incompetent you are as an observer. You cannot know what information the medium possessed ; probably everything in the past life of the inquirer was known, and this test was known, and the medium had practised writing in Hindustani characters for some hours. When the inquirer was placing the paper under the table, the medium scratched off the word rapidly on another sheet of note-paper, imitating previously the initials of the inquirer, and then substituted the one paper for the other when your attention was distracted. But this is by no means the only way in which the trick might be accomplished. The medium's boots might be slipped off, the pencil seized with the toes, and the Hindustani word written. Let me now ask you a question. Did you keep your eyes on the medium's toes whilst the paper was under the table ?

No !

Ah ! then that proves that you did not observe accurately, and you have really not the slightest evidence that the whole thing was not a simple conjuring trick.

MR. D. YOUNGER, mesmerist, has removed from No. 23, Ledbury-road, Bayswater, to No. 22, nearly opposite. See advertisement.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is better that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

Self-proving Messages.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sorry to find that my appeal in "LIGHT" for February 12th, on the above subject, though it has brought me one or two private letters of interest, has thus far elicited little in "LIGHT" except a letter (p. 81) from the writer of the article on "Investigation of Rare Phenomena," in which he merely refers me to "LIGHT" for October 16th, 1885, (a group of testimonials collected by Mr. Eglinton to rebut the charge of fraud). This is a sad declension from the sweeping statements of his previous article; nor does he improve his position by introducing (pp. 81, 82) a good deal of matter which recalls the old advice to the counsel of an unsatisfactory client; "No case;—abuse the plaintiff's attorney."

As, however, my object is simply to discover the truth, and as I am willing to accept as a collaborator anyone who will really help in this pursuit, whatever tone he employs, I will readily make another attempt to get at some evidence. I must first reply to a question asked of me, and I will then show why the alleged "self-proving" messages in the Eglinton collection do not, as they stand, form evidence of value, though it is conceivable that a little further trouble on the part of the witnesses might improve matters considerably.

In the first place, then, your contributor asks me to justify my assertion (p. 75) that "the case where words contained in books 'taken at random' are written in 'closed slates' would fall more properly under a discussion as to the limits of conjuring; since this phenomenon has been reproduced by at least one conjurer."

The conjurer here alluded to is Mr. S. J. Davey. I will quote from Miss Stidolph's report of a sitting with Mr. Davey, given on p. 21 of the Society for Psychical Research *Journal* for January, 1886. Your contributor alludes pretty freely to the *Journal*, so I should have thought that he might have seen this and similar passages (e.g., pp. 20, 31). However, Mr. Davey's article is, I believe, to reappear in an enlarged form in the next issue of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, when it can be procured and criticised by those interested in the subject. Miss Stidolph says:—

"I was seated with him (Mr. Davey) at a small table, when he gave me the following astounding evidence of his powers. He gave into my hands a slate which, when locked, looks like an ordinary box. This box I opened, washed the slate, locked it, and took the key; for some minutes we sat, he with one hand on mine, his other hand on the table. Presently a faint scratching was heard, and continued some little time; when it ceased Mr. Davey unlocked the slate, and lo! it was covered with clear, distinct writing—a letter addressed to myself, and stating if I would wait a little while the writer would go to the Cape and bring me news of my brother. Then I again washed the slate, again it was locked, and again I kept the key. Mr. Davey then asked me to take any volume I liked from the library, to look at a page and remember the number of it. This I did, and again we sat as before. In a few moments the slate was unlocked, when on it was written, not only the number of the page I had thought of, but some of the words which were on the self-same page, and these not ordinary words, but abstruse words, as the book I selected was a learned one. This I considered a most marvellous feat and utterly incomprehensible."

This certainly looks like one of the things which, in your contributor's view, (p. 82) "all the trickery in the world will not enable a trickster to tell me."

I pass on to the special subject of discussion;—namely, the messages in which, quite apart from any possibilities of conjuring, the actual content proves an origin other than the medium's mind. It may be remembered that I divided (p. 75) these cases, for convenience' sake, into three classes, A, B, and C, and pointed out a few simple canons of evidence applicable to each class; canons which I do not understand that your contributor impugns, and which indeed are so obvious that no one, I think, who is at all accustomed to dealing with evidence could question their necessity.

For brevity's sake I must in this letter consider class A alone (or messages whose content is self-proving, as distinguished from proof afforded by handwriting or language employed); and I am quite willing to treat the evidence for this class of Mr. Eglinton's phenomena without *parti pris* of any kind—

neither putting all his manifestations out of court as presumably fraudulent, nor, on the other hand, pretending to the direct insight of the lady who writes to him ("LIGHT," October 16th, 1885, p. 497), "I have always felt intuitively that you were perfectly reliable and true."

What cases, then, have we where actual answers of this self-proving kind are quoted? and what is the evidence that the facts therein mentioned must have been unknown to the medium?

Very few messages of this class are quoted at all. The two principal ones are given by Mrs. de Morgan and Mr. Harry Kellar. I will first give the essential part (pp. 484, 5) of Mrs. de Morgan's message.

"My grandfather, who passed away at Pondicherry, is with me now. Great is my grief that the glorious fact of man's immortality is fraught with so much opposition, but it cannot fail to ultimately triumph."

"The reference," says Mrs. de Morgan, "to Captain de Morgan, shot at Pondicherry, was not taken from my thought. When I read the word, *grandfather*, I said 'No, great-uncle.' But the mistake was inexcusable in me, for the story of Captain de Morgan's death was told by my husband in the *Budget of Paradoxes*, published some years ago."

Would not the mistake have been inexcusable in the medium too? I admit that I am a believer in thought-transference, but I still find that a printed book supplies a more convenient and handy channel of information.

As to the remainder of the message, I do not know whether the "fact fraught with opposition," but which "cannot fail to ultimately triumph," is considered characteristic of the style of the eminent *savant* to whom it is here referred.

Next as to Mr. Kellar's case (p. 481).

Mr. Harry Kellar (I think in 1882, but there are no dates) cites as inexplicable a message received through Mr. Eglinton, which looks very good. "My name is Geary. Don't you remember me? We used to talk of this matter at the St. George's, [the St. George's Hotel, Cape Town.] I am Alfred Geary, of the *Lantern*, you know me and St. Ledger." "Mr. Harry Kellar," says Mr. Eglinton, "is unknown to the English public." This, however, is scarcely fair to those members of the English public who read and remember "LIGHT," since they learnt in "LIGHT," for March 28th, 1885, p. 147, that Mr. Kellar now professes to be able to "duplicate any performance given by mediums after he has seen it done three times." [This citation I owe to Mr. Davey's article.] Some students of "LIGHT," who remembered the issue for March 28th, 1885, were, therefore, puzzled to find Mr. Kellar still cited on October 16th, 1886, under the heading, "Testimony of a Professional Conjurer—the Writing not the Result of Trickery or Sleight of Hand."

I do not profess to suggest how Mr. Kellar may now explain the *manual* part of the séance in question. As to the *contents* of the message, I conjecture that he may have observed the following facts:—

Mr. St. Ledger, it appears, was living in 1882, and Mr. Geary died about 1879 (p. 480). And Mr. Eglinton (p. 459) tells us that he was in South Africa when accused of imposture by Mr. (now Archdeacon) Colley, in a letter printed November 1st, 1878. Mr. Kellar may, therefore, have persuaded himself that Mr. Geary was not necessarily now approaching Mr. Eglinton for the first time, as a spirit, but that Mr. Eglinton might have made that gentleman's acquaintance, or Mr. St. Ledger's, at Cape Town, in a more ordinary way.

There is also a message cited by Major-General Maclean (p. 471): "I am always near Douglas, and will haunt the place"; but this is not explained, so that we cannot judge of its evidential value.

And so far as I can discover, these are the only messages of any importance cited in the "Eglinton number," which even profess to contain self-proving matter—facts previously not known to the medium, and *not written down in the séance-room*. Where names, &c., are written down in the séance-room, or during the séance, the question whether or no Mr. Eglinton can have seen those names belongs to the discussion as to the limits of conjuring,—and, by your contributor's own suggestion, we are putting out of the present argument all cases of this kind.

We cannot, therefore, count as self-proving messages the reply given to Mrs. Brietzke's question (p. 471), "Can you advise for the family of X. Y. Z.?" though the names given in the question were repeated in the answer. For the answer was, "We cannot advise for the family of X. Y. Z." Here, therefore, the sole question is one of prestidigitation—whether Mr. Eglinton could have seen the names and written the answer. I

neither affirm nor deny that he could have done so ; I only point out that the case does not fall under the present limited discussion. On the other hand, a letter signed "E. L. P." (p. 478) gives a case where the question was, "Is F. E. present?" and the answer, "Yes, Frederick Evans is present." This *may* be a self-proving message, for the answer contains more than the question contained ; but something more than "E. L. P.'s" brief assertion that Mr. Eglinton "could not have known who was meant" is needed to assure us that this was really impossible. How many sittings had "E. L. P." had with Mr. Eglinton? and can he be sure whom he mentioned during those sittings? Truesdell's *Bottom Facts of Spiritualism* contains some cases which deserve study in this connection.

A case signed "J. C.," from which extracts are given on p. 487, is, as it stands, too vague and imperfect for discussion.

I may have overlooked one or two cases, but I can find no other avowedly "self-proving" messages quoted, unless we count the Rev. A. J. Rogers' case (p. 496), which does not appear to have completely satisfied him—seeming, indeed, to turn the tables on the questioner, and asking him "Dear Arthur, to what do you particularly refer?"

So far as I can make out, these are the only cases (so far as class A is concerned) in the "Eglinton number" which support your contributor's assertion (p. 81) that "a multitude of witnesses have given exactly that evidence which Mr. Myers now demands afresh." For be it remembered that, according to my simple canon, to which your contributor has not objected, messages, in order to be self-proving, must be quoted at length and explained, so that we may have some assurance that they really do contain facts which are not already in printed books, or within the medium's personal experience, or power of easy discovery.

What view your contributor may now take of this evidence, or of his own assertions, I am not bold enough to predict. But I feel certain that some, at least, of the witnesses who have strongly but vaguely stated that they did obtain these self-proving messages through Mr. Eglinton, but have given no details, will now feel that their position is unsatisfactory. The messages which they received *may* have been—one would almost say *must* have been—evidentially better than those which have been actually cited by the recipients, and which I have above discussed. But can they claim that this shall be taken for granted? Must not their messages, while they remain unquoted, be set down as belonging to the same category as those which are quoted, and which are worth so little?

I do not think that any Spiritualist can call the tone of this letter unfair, or its requirements unduly stringent. And I will once more repeat that—although I do not think that your contributor has hit on a promising vein—no one will be more interested or gratified than I by the production of real evidence for self-proving messages, though these be obtained, not in "locked slates," but by the less marvellous machinery of planchette-writing or tilts of a table.—I am, sir, yours obediently,

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

March 5th, 1887.

The Outlook.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been reading once more that remarkable pamphlet, Cook's *Rationale of Spiritualism*. It was written some ten years ago ; but its diagnosis of the movement and forecast of the lines along which it was likely to march have proved so just that I must ask your leave to draw attention to it.

Mr. Cook holds that the present movement is the mightiest stir of spirit forces that the world has seen. Its object is very far reaching. It is the complete overturn of all institutions that frustrate spiritual development. This movement is as yet little understood, or rather much misunderstood. For many years the author himself failed to find the key.

That key in brief is this : that the spirits view matters completely from the spiritual plane, and we on this side purely from the material plane. Hence misapprehensions and antagonism. Even when we have got above asking about the Derby winner and the rise and fall of Hotchkiss shares, we want chiefly to know whether our loved ones have a nice house in the summer land, and whether they still paint in water colours, or play the piano. In brief, we want to carry the conditions of this material life into the next. We cannot emerge from the sway of the senses.

The object of the spirits, on the other hand, is to carry out a plan, subtle as well as vast. This is to save society, without the

streams of blood that usually accompany great religious and political changes. Hence the farcical element of the movement, the unwise "Bacons" and unmusical "Shelleys," the exposures, and other perplexities. The veil is lifted for a moment ; but only the chosen may pry into the Adytum. Hence also the apparently antagonistic side movements which flourish for a moment and then fall like a house of cards.

Two such movements Mr. Cook could not have failed to add to his list if he had written to-day. "Theosophy" has, without doubt, had a certain mission. Some who have given up its early miracles as fraud, still hold that it has taught the genuine Yoga of India. This question I examine in *Buddhism in Christendom*, the book that you have been kind enough to allude to. I give the initiation of a real Yogi from the Mahabharata, and I show that Yoga and "Theosophy" are pure antagonisms. But it must be confessed that the latter has carried a certain knowledge of psychic matters into many drawing-rooms. It served its purpose and then Madame Coulomb appeared.

It is probable that the spotless apostles of "Psychical Research" will object to being bracketed with Koot Hoomi. They will contend that they have been conspicuous as exposers, not performers, of bad conjuring tricks. But for all that, the two gospels seem practically identical. Say that my father died at Mentone, last Monday, at eleven p.m. At Brighton I see his form at that very moment ; and I enjoy the consolation that he is not parted from me for ever. But here "Psychical Research" and "Theosophy" jump forward to convince me that my dream is a false one. "That was his shell," says "Theosophy." "That was the phantasm of your living father a little tardy in its transit," says "Psychical Research." The two explanations have much in common, not excepting a contempt of evidence and a desire *a posteriori* to explain away the facts of Spiritualism. Directly the Psychical Research Society condemned Mr. Eglinton, not because the evidence was deemed insufficient, but the postulate impossible, it broke into as many pieces as the famous "Shrine." A more important question is suggested by Mr. Cook's pamphlet. I must discuss it in another letter.

ARTHUR LILLIE.

The Misdescription of M. Aksakow's Host.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Under the heading "Transcendental Photography" in "LIGHT" of this date, I read with surprise a paragraph relating to M. Aksakow's experiments in London, which says :—"The gentleman in whose house they were made desires us to say that he is improperly described as a 'nobleman,' a 'Gloucestershire landowner,' or 'a wealthy man.' He has suffered some annoyance from this misdescription, and wishes to say that he is simply the owner of the house in some of the rooms of which the experiments were conducted."

Allow me, as the translator of M. Aksakow's articles, to clear myself of any fault in this surely very strange misdescription, by simply transcribing the original German, which will be found at pp. 2, 3, of the January number of *Psychische Studien*.

"Vor Allem machte ich ganz natürlich Bekanntschaft mit dem in Rede stehende Cirkel, der im Ganzen aus nur drei Personen besteht ; aus dem Herrn des Hauses—*einem reichen Edelmann, Landbesitzer in Gloucestershire*,* der so eben erst den Bau seines Wohnhauses vollendet hatte—aus seiner Frau, und einem andern Herrn, ihrem Freunde."—

M. Aksakow will probably explain how he came to make so odd a mistake.—Your obedient servant,

March 5th.

YOUR TRANSLATOR.

Spirit Identity—or What?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have just received a letter from my son in Australia, who has been there since he was a boy, and whom I have not seen for about seventeen years. In this letter the following passage occurs :—

"You know I have not had time or inclination to attend séances lately, and for strong reasons have avoided the subject altogether. . . . Colonel — was constantly with me when I was ill. I did not know that you knew him or who he was exactly, until I read your letter."

I had written to my son in October last, and had there made allusion to a Colonel —, of the same name as my son mentions, who was killed in the Chinese war, in 1842, and who was, in fact, my brother and his uncle.

The death of my brother occurred some years before my son

* Italics mine.—Tr.

was born, and this, and his having been so long deprived of home talk will account for his ignorance. I have studied Spiritualism too long to rely on the identity of any soul from the other side; but the only alternative to identity is awful to think of: that there should be beings in the economy of Providence who know so much about us, and are able to play a false part towards us from one end of the world to the other! And what the object was of visiting my son in such guise during his previous illness I cannot know until I get an answer to my next letter. Here, in the case of fraud, is a being who has had the power of giving the name of an individual to a medium who at the time knew nothing about the person it represented, but which medium, by a mere chance, has found afterwards that this being has been representing his own uncle, shot dead in battle years before he was born!

Supposing, however, the case to be true, the whole scene is changed, the whole sentiment becomes hallowed, provided his uncle acted as a comforter or just adviser. This I do know, that during my son's long illness he was obsessed; and I begged him to forego séances, and to work in his garden as much as he could, so as to get natural sleep and drive off his persecutors. I had feared his illness was consumption, but I think now it was whooping cough, as he is again in rude health—"great form," as he says; but I have no proof of what it was, as during his illness, from some invincible prejudice, he would not consult a doctor, though a doctor is his particular friend. Perhaps I should say that this Colonel was a man respected while living and honoured at his death. Sir Hugh Gough, the General in Command, in the general orders, dated Chapoo, May 19th, 1842, says:—

"I may be permitted to express my deep regret at the loss to the service and to the country of Lieutenant-Colonel—, of the Royal Irish, who fell at the head of his corps in the full career of renown, honoured by that corps, lamented by all."

From the number of letters I have before me testifying to his character, I will select a short passage from a soldier to a friend:—

"We shall never see the like of our Colonel again, as all hands say who have ever soldiered under him."

On a handsome monument in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, dedicated to the soldiers of the Royal Irish who were killed in China in 1840-41-42, there is a group in *basso relievo*. Colonel — is lying on the ground, the doctor is holding his wrist and pronouncing him dead. Twelve or fifteen years ago at four consecutive séances, three in different places, a being, purporting to be Colonel —, communicated with myself, certainly unexpectedly in two instances.

MIROR.

An Appeal to "Lily."
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—May I be allowed, through your columns, to ask your correspondent "Lily," if she cannot be induced to re-publish, in separate form, the "Visions," which appeared as a supplement to "LIGHT" for July 25th, 1885? The number of "LIGHT" is, I am told, out of print, but it seems to me that the "Visions" are an important contribution to the elucidation of a great mystery, and they might appear so to others were they more widely known.—I remain, sir, yours truly,

Aspley Guise, Woburn.

E. S. W.

March 1st, 1887.

Animals and their Souls.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I shall be glad to have space for some animadversions, not on the recent interesting letters which bore the heading, "Have Animals Souls?" but on that heading itself. For, defining soul, as I believe it ought to be defined, to be that principle in virtue of which organic life subsists, it follows necessarily that, as organised beings, animals have souls, and could not subsist without them. In this view the question to be asked is, not whether animals have souls, but whether they have souls capable of surviving their bodies. For if, as stated in the Hermetic books (*e.g.*, *Asclepius*, Part I.), souls are not all of the same quality, but differ in mode and duration, it may well be that there are some kinds which are capable, and some which are incapable, of continuance after death. In which case the question about the animals would be, as just said, not whether they have souls, but what kind of souls they have. Ancient belief—which was founded not on the preferences or prejudices of the uninstructed majority, but on the knowledges of the initiated few—was unanimous on this subject. Animals

not only had souls, but had souls capable of continuance after death. As with men, it was not the death of the body that put an end to them, for they passed through many bodies. But neither were they immortal in themselves, nor were they immortal as animals, but passed on into higher forms according to the mode and degree of their unfoldment—form being the expression of qualities—until the human was reached.

This question, or rather a question which involves it, was raised coincidentally in the *Theosophist*, for February, p. 274, by a Hindû contributor, who asked for references, other than those of *The Perfect Way*, in support of retrogressive incarnation (*i.e.*, from the human back to the animal), and an answer in affirmation of the doctrine was given in the same number, consisting in a citation from Plato's *Phædo*, and some references to the earlier Greek philosophy; according to which there is an interchange of souls, by transmigration, between men and animals, according to the developments and deserts of the individual. Among the further references which might have been adduced, and of which your readers may like to be informed, are the almost identical statements in the *Divine Pyramider*, Book IV., and the *Bhagavat-Gita*, l. xvi.; the rituals and symbols of ancient Egypt, and notably the Sphinx, which unites all extremes of life in one form; the life of Apollonius of Tyana, who is said to have recognised the soul of King Amasis doing penance in the body of a lion; the Biblical parable of Jacob's ladder, on which the souls were seen ascending and descending; and the teaching of the Kabala. For the Kingdoms of Edôm, said in Genesis to pass away and perish, while only the Kingdom of Israel endured, are explained in the Kabala as denoting the various elementary stages in the elaboration of man which precede and lead up to the perfected humanity, and which, being provisional only, are necessarily incapable of permanence. Meanwhile, until the establishment of the Kingdom of Israel, or advent of the man perfect, the soul concerned ascends and descends this ladder of evolution, gathering according to its needs the experiences requisite for its full edification in the Divine image, when, and when only, "the gift of God, even life eternal" is attained.

According to this doctrine—formerly universal, and it is to be hoped again to become so, being eminently logical and just—there is one soul of men and animals, having many modes and degrees, and passing from form to form in accomplishment of its pilgrimage—a pilgrimage of which the starting point is the dust of the ground, and the goal the throne of the Most High.

So far, however, is this doctrine of an universal soul common to all creatures, from obtaining recognition as yet even among professed initiates in spiritual mysteries; and so slender sometimes is the amount of intelligence brought to the study of those mysteries, that we find volume after volume purporting to be written by proficient in Occultism, in which the animals are confounded with "the animal," and condemned accordingly as inherently and wholly evil, and even pronounced to be therefore lawful subjects of any cruelty which man, in his selfishness, may choose to inflict upon them. As if man were not, by the very indulgence of such selfishness, degraded below the level not only of the human but of the animal, down to that of the infernal, from which there is no redemption.

It is, not, however, because animals have souls and continue after death that we are bound to be just and merciful to them, but because we ourselves have souls of which the principles of justice and mercy are the very life-blood, and which we degrade and destroy by being unjust and unmerciful. Suffer as the animals may through our ill-treatment of them, we ourselves suffer yet more thereby. So that the notion, so prevalent, that humanity—meaning men and women—can be benefited by methods involving the ill-treatment of animals is utterly absurd and false. Humanity cannot be benefited by aught that is, by its very nature, subversive of humanity. May the opening in your pages of the question of the souls of animals be the means of bringing all Spiritualists to a sense of the obligation in regard to animals imposed on them by their faith!

E. M.

Mr. Milner Stephen.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—On January 1st you introduced Mr. Milner Stephen to the public with a favourable notice, and with testimonials appended. I went to him, and was operated upon three times for partial deafness, a disease in the cure of which he claims to have had great success. The result was complete failure. The *Pall Mall Gazette* made him a fair offer of support if he was successful in two test cases which they sent to him, one of which

was deafness. He utterly failed; whereupon the *Pall Mall Gazette* pronounced him an impostor. Without using so harsh a term, I would be inclined to say that he is utterly inefficient. He has been working now for some time in Orchard-street, and I think that in justice to your readers you should soon report progress, and let the public know whether in your opinion he is a humbug, or whether you think he has any claims to the possession of healing power. Written testimonials are naught. They can be fabricated by the dozen. The only thing at all satisfactory is personal reference to patients who have been cured.—Yours faithfully,

H. B. L.

February 21st.

[We received Mr. Milner Stephen, whose name was well known to us already, on his arrival in this country. He presented us with abundant testimonials of his alleged power, and we gave our readers specimens of them, as we were in duty bound to do. Since then has come the accusation of imposture and charlatanry in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. We attach little importance to the opinions on such a matter of this sensational journal. Mr. Milner Stephen gives his vindication below. We regret that it does not appear in the paper which made the charges. We give it as a matter of fairness.—EDS. "LIGHT."]

Mr. Milner Stephen's Vindication.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—For more than a month I have borne, as patiently as I could, the imputation that I am an "impostor," for professing to heal the afflicted (but not in every case, as some cannot receive the influence) by "laying on of hands." This charge was made by a reporter, sent by the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on the absurd ground that on two occasions I failed to cure, in his presence, the only two persons whom I began to treat as so-called "test cases of deafness."

In one of these cases (that of a general officer, who was present on both the occasions referred to, and can corroborate my statements!), after some subsequent visits, we agreed to postpone treatment, on account of a catarrhal difficulty, till the warm weather. In the other I received a temporary certificate, on the second visit (as she was to continue under my treatment till quite restored), from her aunt—attested by two ladies present—that "she heard and answered whispered questions at a foot distance," although "compelling persons to bawl into her ears" before she came to me. Hence, this was the beginning of a cure.

As the public have been shamefully misled by the artful account by that reporter, of the visit to the "Normal College for the Blind," at Norwood, I will briefly state the facts. I received an invitation from the head of that college to go out to Norwood, and try "some older pupils who had left the college, whom he would send for if they might wish to try the test." But he expressly wrote that "he should not allow me to go into the college; as that was a question entirely for the governing body."

I took the doctor's letter to the editor, and arranged with him that the reporter should meet me at Norwood, on Saturday, the 22nd January, and I invited the same general officer to accompany Mrs. Stephen and myself. We were received in the doctor's small private parlour; and the reporter came in shortly after.

After waiting some time, three well-dressed young women, who had been sent for, entered the room. They were hopelessly blind; one, a married lady, through atrophy, or destruction of the optic nerve; as she said the first oculists in London had told her, after their examination with the ophthalmoscope.

The two other young women had leucoma, or white scales covering their eyes, which, I told them, could not be restored through me by the process of absorption—if at all—in less than six to twelve months by almost daily treatment.

Therefore, as I disavow ever performing miracles, I refused to treat them, saying they would be useless as "test cases," and it would be in vain to try them as an experiment, for they lived in Norwood and I myself in London.

But I treated the youngest of them, aged nineteen, for extreme deafness; and on her saying "she heard better," I invited her to visit my rooms in the course of two days. She came with her aunt, and after my breathing into her ears, "she heard and answered whispered questions at a foot distance," as before stated; and if she comes to me again, in warmer weather, I venture to predict that her hearing will be thoroughly restored.

This was all the absurd fiasco at Norwood—not in the college, nor with its blind pupils!

On the day of the publication of the report, so-called, and for more than a month since, I have been writing letters to the editor, trying in vain to get him to correct the report, and my last letter he has retained three weeks. I have suffered for my folly in not taking other steps to disabuse the public mind. But I now throw myself on the generous protection of an honourable Press, in asking you, sir, and others, to give me space for this vindication. And I will confidently ask an enlightened public how they can believe that I, at the end of a long life, during which I have filled more or less prominent positions, with scores of Australian newspapers publishing, during six years, long reports of my cures in public; with hundreds of highly authenticated testimonials by governors, judges, Premiers, doctors of divinity (lending their churches also for my public healings twenty times), medical men, coroners, and other prominent persons, with many affidavits of my cures of cancers and of blindness,—I repeat it, how can an enlightened public believe that I, who have just arrived in England to do good to my afflicted countrymen, can possibly be such an impostor as is alleged, even though I should fail in fifty cases, although the reporter has not seen me fail in one? For, as every healer knows, he often has to treat patients from ten to twenty times, and many a patient is totally unresponsive of his "influence"!—I am, sir, yours, &c.,

17, Orchard-street:

G. MILNER STEPHEN.

March 3rd, 1887.

GLAMOUR.

Pride is the Death and Hell of all things good,
Rearing its brazen gates around the soul,
And barring out from it all natural food
Wherewith the conscience fain would make it whole.
It petrifies the Heart,—corrupts the Will,—
And with fantastic shapes betrays the Mind;
Mis-showing that as good, which is but ill,
Whereby men say they see, but yet are blind.
It is a form of the distempered eye
Of Lunacy by phrenzied passion led,
Which sees all Truth through its own Phantasy,
When with a blanket of his prison bed—
Draping his nakedness, as with a shroud,
"My robe of state," the maniac cries aloud.

A. A. W.

"THE SPIRITUALIST."—Wanted, a complete set of the *Spiritualist*.—Address, stating terms, "The Editors of 'LIGHT.'"

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—SPECIAL FUND.—We are requested to intimate to those friends who have kindly promised subscriptions to this fund, and who have not yet paid, that the hon. treasurer, Mr. Morell Theobald, will be glad to receive the amount as soon as it is convenient. The remittances should be sent to him at 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.

THE LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning next, at eleven o'clock, Mr. Price will hold a meeting for Mesmeric Healing. We wish our friends would take advantage of this opportunity of learning something about this important matter. In the evening, at seven o'clock, there will be a physical séance.—F. W. READ, Sec., 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday, March 6th, the guides of Miss Keeses gave us a beautiful address, subject: "Spiritualism: Fact or Folly." The hall was filled, every seat being occupied. At the close of the service, many expressed their gratification with the truly spiritual address delivered. On Sunday next, at 11.30 prompt, we shall have a benefit séance. Evening, at seven, Mr. J. Hopcroft.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Secretary, 9, Pasley-road, Walworth.

A FAMILY OF VAMPIRES.—One might imagine that the wheel of time is turning backward on reading the following story which appears in a Continental paper. A landed proprietor, Baron de Gostovsky, living at Saboucz, near Danzig, made the request that at his death his head should be cut off before his interment, a service which he said he had performed on the body of his wife after her death. "We are a family of vampires," he added, "and if this precaution be not taken we can find no repose in the grave, but come back and bring misfortune to our children." The eldest son faithfully fulfilled the father's request, but notwithstanding this he fell ill a few days after the funeral. Then he went to the cemetery, caused the grave to be opened, turned the body over, and threw the head into a wood near by. Only the slight punishment of a fortnight's imprisonment, imposed upon the perpetrator of the outrage, was given, on account of the statement of numerous witnesses, all of whom testified that the profanation of the sepulchre had its reason solely in the firmly rooted superstitions in Lithuanian country districts.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—“Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.”—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

BARON CARL DU PREL (Munich) in *Nord und Sud*.—“One thing is clear; that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside or the tiny morsel of slate-pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead-pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. (10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions.”

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—“Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent.”

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—“I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me.”

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—“I have for many years known that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and, when fully accepted, revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters.”—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russell Wallace*.

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—“Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, I have, within the last nine months” (this was written in 1858), “had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question.”

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—“I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . In short, the testimony has been so abundant and contemporaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—“The essential question is this. What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. . . . I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging of the truth of the spiritual theory.”

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author. Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: “1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals answer questions and spell out coherent communications.”

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—“I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated ‘magnetic,’ ‘somnambule,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—“Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception.”

He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: “Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late now to deny their existence.”

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.G.S.—“My position, therefore, is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved, quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in duration and completeness to those of its advocates; and when they can discover and show in detail, either how the phenomena are produced or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers—then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer.”—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*.

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—“The writer” (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) “can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of so-called Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdemain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a

mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which, even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil.”—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—“No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homeopathy, and Mesmerism) deserve to be observed, recorded, and arranged; and whether we call by the name of mesmerism, or by any other name, the science which proposes to do this, is a mere question of nomenclature. Among those who profess this science there may be careless observers, prejudiced recorders, and rash systematisers; their errors and defects may impede the progress of knowledge, but they will not stop it. And we have no doubt that, before the end of this century, the wonders which perplex almost equally those who accept and those who reject modern mesmerism will be distributed into defined classes, and found subject to ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science.” These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: “We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorised the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a dear and near member of his family.”

CONJURERS AND PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

Mediums who are the instruments of an external agency, have more than once been confronted with conjurers who deceive by sleight of hand; and in the same manner that no man of science who has thoroughly and fairly investigated the phenomena has failed to become convinced of their reality, so no conjurer who has been confronted with the same facts has been able to explain their occurrence by prestidigitation. Houdin, Jacobs, Bellachini, Hermann, Kellar, and others have already confessed their powerlessness to produce under the same conditions what occurs without human intervention in the presence of a medium. We give the testimony of one of them:—

HARRY KELLAR, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, at Calcutta, regarding which he said:—

“In conclusion, let me state that after a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny of these wonderful experiences I can arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form; nor was there in the room any mechanism or machinery by which could be produced the phenomena which had taken place. The ordinary mode by which Maskelyne and other conjurers imitate levitation or the floating test could not possibly be done in the room in which we were assembled.”

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By “M.A. (Oxon.)”

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitchings of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

16, CRAVEN STREET, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

This Society of Spiritualists, founded for the purpose, primarily, of uniting those who share a common faith, and then of giving information respecting that faith to those who seek for it, has now occupied Chambers at the above address. There will be found an extensive Library of works especially attractive to Spiritualists; the various Journals of Spiritualism published in this and other countries; and opportunities of converse with friends like-minded. The Alliance holds periodical Soirées at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, where papers on interesting phases of the subject are read, and discussion is invited. Members of the Alliance are eligible for joining its Research section. Donations solicited.

[One or more Members of Council attend on Tuesday evenings in each week, from Five to Seven (excepting on the Second Tuesday in each Month, when the hour is from Six to Seven) to receive friends and answer inquiries.]

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MORELL THEOBALD, Hon. Sec.

02, Granville Park, Blackheath, S.E.

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